

party received a message from Governor YANG to the effect that he did not wish the expedition to come to Sinkiang. He had already telegraphed to Peking, saying that he did not want to see the expedition in his province.¹

HEMPEL, HAUDE and HASLUND, who also had KAULL, DETTMANN and LI in their column, therefore drew up the following telegram in English to Governor YANG:

»We have to-day been informed that the members of Dr SVEN HEDIN's scientific expedition have not obtained Your Excellency's permission to cross the frontier of Sinkiang, and that you request our return to Peking. In reply we wish to inform Your Excellency that our return across the desert is impossible for the following reasons: Our expedition left Peking without sufficient winter equipment, as we had intended to procure this in Sinkiang. Since, moreover, the journey here has taken much longer than we anticipated, all our provisions and the whole of the rest of our equipment have been used up, and we have not the wherewithal for a return at this time of the year. All our money is in Urumchi, or was to have been sent there from Peking after our arrival. A large number of our camels have been lost in the desert, and those we have left are so worn out that they are not in a fit state to make a desert journey of more than a few days. We have been told that we are suspected of being Communists. We deny this most emphatically, and would remind Your Excellency of the fact that the Swedish and the German Legations in Peking have given guarantees to His Excellency Marshal CHANG TSO-LIN that none of us intends to engage in politics of any sort, and that none of us is a Communist. We beg Your Excellency to take the above into consideration, and to allow us to continue our journey to Hami. We take advantage of the opportunity of expressing our profound respect for Your Excellency.»

On December 6th the leader of the column, Major HEMPEL, received a favourable reply from Governor YANG, who gave his permission for the entire staff of the expedition to continue to Hami on the following three conditions: forfeiture of arms, investigation of baggage, leaving behind of all servants and camels at the frontier.

On December 9th the column started for Hami, reaching this town after a three days' journey. On their arrival they immediately handed over all their weapons and the baggage was thoroughly examined. Not until the end of the month did the members of the column receive a part of the moneys we had deposited in Urumchi from Peking. On December 29th they set off for Urumchi in three carts.

We read all these letters carefully and conferred for several hours on this threatening situation. What I found not least annoying in all this was that the whole of our mail from May to September had been sent to Peking to be censored, since there was no one in Urumchi who could read Swedish. (This important mail did not come into our hands until the end of March 1928.)

It was, however, already evident that the hostile attitude towards us was beginning to undergo a revision. So, for example, MARSCHALL had been well received by the troops he met at the frontier, who had hastened to supply the sedan-

¹ In October Governor YANG had got into touch with the Ministry of Education in Peking, with which he had exchanged detailed telegrams about the expedition. On this occasion, as on so many others, our envoyé, O. EWERLÖF, intervened skilfully and energetically on our behalf.